

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW AUSTRALIAN FISH OF THE GENUS CONGIOPUS.

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Fig. 333.

THE genus *Congiopus* was founded by Perry, with *C. percatus* as type; its status being as below:

Congiopus Perry, *Arcana* or *Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, 1811.

Agriopus Cuvier, *Reg. Anim.* (ed. 2), ii, 1829, p. 168.

Cephalinus Gronow, *Cat. Fish, Brit. Mus.* (ed. Gray), 1854, p. 159.

Congiopodus Gill, *Mem. Nat. Acad. Sci. Wash.*, vi, 1893, p. 118.

I am unable to consult Perry's work, part of which appears to have been issued in 1810 and part in 1811. Marschall⁽¹⁾ does not seem to have seen the "Arcana," but lists the genus under the form *Congiopodus*; this mis-spelling and the erroneous date (1871) have been copied by most subsequent authors.

Cuvier was aware of Perry's paper, as noted in the "Histoire."⁽²⁾

In his "Genera of Fishes"⁽³⁾ Jordan erroneously credits the editorship of Gronow's work to Albert Günther.

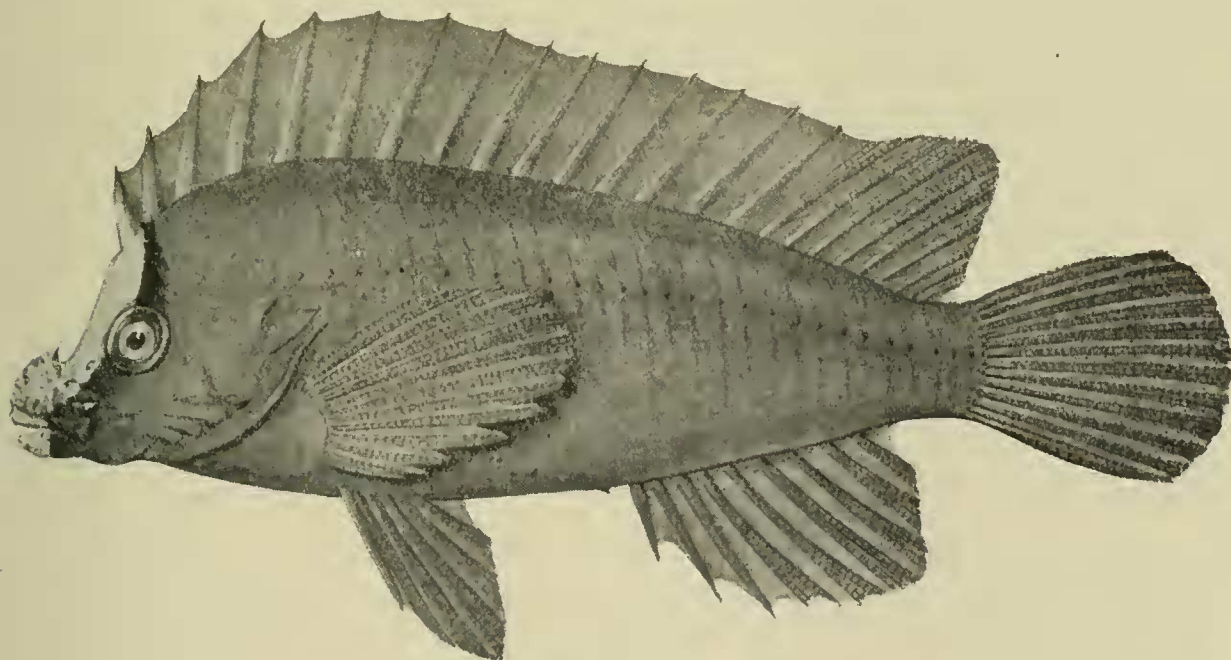


Fig. 333. *Congiopus leucometopon*.

(1) Marschall, *Nomencl. Zool.*, 1873, p. 71.

(2) Cuv. & Val., *Hist. Nat. Poiss.*, iv, 1829, p. 382, footnote.

(3) Jordan, *Genera of Fishes*, ii, 1919, p. 258.

Several species of the genus *Congiopus* (*Agriopus*) have been described from Chilian, South African, and Australian seas, but hitherto one only has been recognized from our waters. This (*C. leucopaccilus* Rich.) is known from South Australia and King George Sound, Southern Western Australia. A second Australian species is described as follows:

CONGIOPUS LEUCOMETOPON sp. nov.

D. xv, 9; A. iii, 6 (7); V. i, 5; P. 12 (11); C. 14.

Length of head 2.9, height of body 3.0, and length of caudal 3.6 in the length. Diameter of eye 4.8, interorbital space 6.1, and length of snout 3.0 in the head.

Head compressed, narrowed suddenly to the base of the snout, anterior profile very steep, snout bulbous and rugose, with a pair of short spines above directed upwards and backwards, and another on each side above the expanded distal end of the maxilla; mouth slightly oblique, the chin roughened like the snout, jaws equal; the maxilla does not reach the verticle of the eye. Four blunt processes on the margin of the preopercle and a weak flat spine imbedded on the opercular flap. The posterior nostril is on a level with, but in advance of, the lower edge of the eye; the anterior nostril is on a lower level. Gills four, no slit behind the last. Small pseudobranchiae present.

Teeth. Those in the jaws set in broad bands, each of which has a median suture, a triangular patch on the vomer, none on the palatines or tongue.

Fins. The first dorsal spine stands over the middle of the eye, the following ones are successively longer to the fourth, thence subequal, the longest being about half the length of the head; the soft rays form a lobe, higher than the spinous portion, the middle rays being 1.5 in the length of the head. The anal spines are strong, the third being equal in length to that of the longest dorsal, those of both fins are normally hidden in the membranes; the soft rays form a lobe similar to that of the dorsal; the hinder insertion of the fin is forward of that of the dorsal. The pectorals are large, extending to nearly above the first spine of the anal, with a broad base, the rays of the lower half with free tips. Ventrals pointed, extending to the vent and nearly as far as the pectorals, the spine strong. Caudal rounded, its peduncle compressed, the depth being one-third the height of the body.

Body compressed, naked, with vertical pliae or crease-like marks, each line passing through one of the lateral pores; the latter arise in advance of the opercular flap, and pass, with a lower curve than the dorsal profile, to the middle of the caudal peduncle; there are 28-30 pores in the series. The vertical marks were not apparent in the fresh specimen, but appeared after immersion in the

preservative; they are indicated in the drawing. A minute post-anal papilla is present.

Colours. Forehead, including the first dorsal spine, the front of the snout and tip of the chin white. This is followed by a jet black band, which arises narrowly at the base of the second spine, broadens, and passes obliquely through the eye across the hinder half of the snout, encircling the lower jaw behind the chin. The rest of the head, body, and fins are of deep coffee colour.

Locality etc. Described from two specimens, of which the smaller is marked as the type. The variation in the number of rays enclosed within brackets refers to the larger specimen; this measures 160 mm. in length, and was collected on the beach at Glenelg, South Australia, after a severe storm, by members of the Museum staff. The type, which measures 130 mm. in length, was taken at the same place and under similar conditions by Mr. H. M. Cooper. Type, No. F. 455.

This species differs from all other described members of the genus by having three spines in the anal fin. Many writers would regard this as justifying the erection of a new genus, and I shall be quite prepared to learn of the species being so erected. The number of genera constituted nowadays is overwhelming, and the practice must sooner or later fall under the weight of the burden cast upon it. One of the negative characters ascribed to the genus is the absence of preorbital spines, yet in *C. granulatus* from the Cape, three rough preorbital spines are described. Jordan and Starks⁽¹⁾ contrast their *Ocosia* with *Agriopus* and apparently inadvertently state that it differs therefrom in lacking the preopercular spine. In the description of the species *O. vespa*, they describe the maxillary as reaching to below the middle of the eye, a statement at variance with the figure. This species agrees with *C. leucometopon* in having three anal spines, but its general alliance appears to be with *Tetraroge* rather than with *Congiopus*.

(1) Jordan & Starks, Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus., xxvii, 1904, p. 162, fig. 17.